LINO BLOCK PRINTS

**Grade**: 4th-12th

**Age**: 9 and up

**Activity Summary:**

Students will learn how to make linoleum (lino) block relief prints.  
  
Before beginning this, or any other printmaking lesson, have a look at [**Printmaking 101**](http://www.kinderart.com/printmaking/print101.shtml) and [**Printmaking 102**](http://www.kinderart.com/printmaking/print102.shtml) to learn about the various forms of printmaking and the materials used. For a simplified version of this printmaking technique, try [**Styrofoam Printmaking**](http://www.kinderart.com/printmaking/styro.shtml). It is a great introductory lesson for the primary grades (ages 4 and up).  
  
A lino print results when a piece of linoleum (either household or special lino you can purchase from an art supply store) has had pieces cut out of it, been inked and been printed. For this activity, sharp tools are required. For this reason, it is not recommended that you try this with children under the ages of eight or nine. ALWAYS have an adult present.

Students will create a print based on an animal they would find at the zoo and its natural habitat. Pre-lesson would be an in-betweener handout where students learn to draw an animal and use the information in the handout to determine the natural habitat.

**What You Need:**

* Paint or ink
* Soft rubber brayers or small paint rollers or paint brushes.
* An old cookie tray or piece of plexiglass to roll the ink out on.
* Linoleum cutters.
* Piece of linoleum. (You can purchase small pieces of linoleum for printmaking from any art supply store. A special softoleum is available for school use. This material is extra soft and very nice to work with).
* Paper

**What You Do:**

1. The tools used in this case are straight knives, V-shaped tools and U-shaped gouges.
2. The basic idea is that you cut away those areas you wish to remain the color of the paper you are printing on. The images can be as simple or as detailed as you wish.
3. It is possible to draw your idea out on paper first, then transfer the image onto the linoleum using carbon paper.
4. Once the design has been carved into the lino, you are ready to print using a small amount of ink which is rolled onto the lino. (See printing with a brayer directions found in [**Printmaking 102**](http://www.kinderart.com/printmaking/print102.shtml)).
5. Paper is placed on the plate and rubbed lightly.
6. Repeat until you have an edition of prints.

**One Step Further:**

Experiment with different types of paper.

**Tips:**

You can make the linoleum easier to cut by warming it up on a hot plate before carving into it. Always cut AWAY from yourself. ALWAYS make sure you are using sharp -- not dull -- tools.

**Wrap Up:**

When the prints are finished, put them up on the wall or lay them out on a table or floor. Look at the differences between each of the prints. Why do they change in darkness? Is the ink thicker in some areas and thinner in others? Are the lines smooth? Rough? Did the prints turn out the way you expected? What would you do differently next time? These are all good questions to ask your students (and yourself).